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Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Identical letters dated 28 June 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing following the most recent Palestinian terrorist attack perpetrated against the citizens of Israel.

This morning, 28 June 2004, at approximately 8.15 a.m. (local time), Palestinian terrorists fired four Qassam rockets on the southern town of Sderot, killing 2 Israeli civilians, including a toddler, and injuring at least 11 others. One of the rockets struck near a nursery school in the Neveh Eshkol neighbourhood, killing Afik Zahavi, age 4, and Mordechai Yosopov, age 49. The father of the four-year-old boy, Yitzhak Ohayon, said today: "We were supposed to go to his end-of-year party in kindergarten tomorrow ... and now instead we'll be going to his funeral." Ruthie Zahavi, the mother of the boy, was also critically wounded in the attack. A second rocket hit a nearby coffee shop. The terrorist organization Hamas immediately claimed responsibility for the deadly rocket attack.

Today's Palestinian missile attack is yet the latest cruel reminder of the brutal nature of Palestinian terrorism, which tries to strike at innocent Israelis in the hearts of Israeli towns on a continuing basis. Since the beginning of the Palestinian uprising in September 2000, Palestinian terrorist organizations have worked mercilessly, and in grave violation of international law, to turn population centres in the Gaza Strip into a base from which they can shell communities deep inside Israel, terrifying the people and endangering both Israeli and Palestinian lives. During this time, terrorists have indiscriminately fired over 260 Qassam rockets at these communities in wanton acts of terror.

Monday's attack was perpetrated just hours after Palestinian terrorists had detonated a massive explosive charge inside a weapons-smuggling tunnel under the Orchan outpost on Sunday, 27 June, at approximately 9.45 p.m. (local time). The

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attack killed Staff Sergeant Roi Nissim, age 20, and wounded five others, some seriously. Yasser Arafat's own Fatah Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades and Hamas claimed joint responsibility for the attack.

The Palestinian Authority still refuses to undertake its most basic obligations to end terrorism and incitement, in fulfilment of the commitments made in the road map. The flagrant refusal of the Palestinian leadership to fulfil its counter-terrorist obligations constitutes a brazen violation of the most basic obligations of international law, human rights and Security Council resolutions, and serves to sabotage any political initiative for bringing calm to the area. As long as this refusal continues, Israel is compelled to take the necessary defensive measures to protect its citizens.

The Palestinian leadership's continuing support and toleration for terrorism is the single greatest obstacle to a peaceful solution. Only a unified and uncompromising stand against the perpetrators of these crimes can bring an end to the Palestinian strategy of terrorism and violence and enable progress towards the vision of a negotiated two-State solution, as part of the road map process. Israel calls upon the members and bodies of the international community to express their unequivocal condemnation of the deliberate murder of innocent civilians, including indiscriminate rocket attacks against civilian communities, and to make clear to the Palestinian leadership and to those regimes that sponsor terrorism, their absolute rejection of terrorist tactics. We can accept nothing less than the complete dismantling of terrorist organizations and relentless efforts to prevent terrorism and bring its perpetrators and supporters to justice, in accordance with international law, signed agreements between the parties, and Security Council resolutions, in particular Council resolution 1373 (2001).

I submit the present letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism launched in September 2000, which document the crimes for which the terrorists and their supporters must be held fully accountable.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 156 and 67, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative